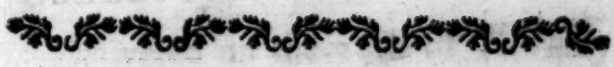


LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.
A COLLECTION OF DISCOURSES.

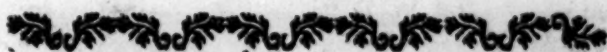


LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

A COLLECTION of
DISCOURSES

Delivered on the 29th of *Fe-*
bruary to a Select SOCIETY.

Committed to the PRESS, because
improper for the PULPIT.





LEAP-YEAR
LECTURES.

A Collection of

DISCOURSES

Delivered at the
British Museum Society.



Committed to the Press, because
improper for the Press.



Leap-Year LECTURES.

A COLLECTION of DISCOURSES

Delivered on the 29th of *February*
to a SELECT SOCIETY.

Committed to the PRESS, because improper
for the PULPIT.

The SUBJECTS as follow :

He that is wounded in the Stones, or hath his Privy
Member cut off, shall not enter into the Con-
gregation of the Lord. DEUT. xxiii. 1.

And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we
be shamed. GEN. xxxviii. 23.

And he said, Let it not be known that a Wo-
man came into the Floor. RUTH ii. 14.

I made a Covenant with my Eyes, why then
should I think upon a Maid? JOB xxxi. 1.

There be three Things which are too won-
derful for me, yea four which I know not : the
Way of an Eagle in the Air, the Way of a Ser-
pent upon a Rock, the Way of a Ship in the
Midst of the Sea, and the Way of a Man with a
Maid. PROV. xxx. 18, 19.

But a Woman among all those have I not found.
ECCLES. vii. 28.

L O N D O N,

Printed for S. BLADON, N^o. 28,
Paternoster-Row. MDCC LXXIII.

Leap-Year LECTURES.

A

Collection of DISCOURSES

Delivered on the 23d of February
to a SELECT SOCIETY.

Committed to the Press, because improper
for the Pulpit.

The SUBJECTS as follow :

He that is wounded in the Stones, or hath his Privy
Member cut off, shall not enter into the Con-
gregation of the Lord. Deut. xxiii. 1.

And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we
be shamed. Gen. xxxviii. 25.

And he said, I know that a Wo-
man came in unto me. 1st.

I made a Co-
alition with them. 2d.

There be three which are too won-
derful for me, yet four which I know not : the

Way of an Hawk in the Air, the Way of a Ser-
pent upon a Rock, the Way of a Ship in the

Midst of the Sea, and the Way of a Man with a

Maid. Prov. xxx. 18, 19.

For a Woman among all these have I not found.

Proverbs. vii. 25.



LONDON,

Printed for S. BARNES, No. 23,
Parliament-Row. MDCCLXXXIII.

2 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

LEAP-YEAR
LECTURES.

LECTURE I.

DEUT. XXIII. 1.

*He that is wounded in the Stones, or
hath his Privy Member cut off, shall
not enter into the Congregation of
the Lord.*

STRANGE Doctrine, this! and,
with regard to many of my
Auditors, I may venture to say
unaccountable!—Does not even Na-
tural Religion constantly enforce

B

Dictates

2 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

Dictates of the most generous and diffusive Benevolence?—Are we not instructed to be humane, friendly, and well-affectioned one towards another?—To be of a good-natured, sympathizing Disposition?—Of a kind, gentle, mild, and courteous Temper?—To bear with each others Infirmities, and so fulfil the Law of *Christ*?—To do as we would be done unto? &c.—But how is all this consistent with my Text?—Is it reasonable that Priests of any Profession should be authorized to excommunicate a Man for unavoidable Defects?—It cannot be.—Even to reproach or upbraid in these Cases is contrary to the Custom of every civilized Nation, and a Practice used by none that I know of in the conversible World, except two Sorts of People, *viz.* Fools and Children.

Under

LECTURE I. 3

Under these Difficulties I applied to an intelligent Lady of my Acquaintance, those of the Fair Sex being generally the best Casuists upon such Occasions; and she gave it as her Opinion, that my Text was a Branch of the Ceremonial Law, abrogated under the *much better Times* of the Gospel; that *Moses* had indeed pointed out a Method by which, in those early Ages of the Church, a young Woman's Virginity might be discovered, and a *hard-hearted Jew* come to the Knowledge of his Wife's Infidelity,—but, says she, if a Man, in these *enlightened Days*, should trust to those old-fashioned Tokens, or try his Lady's Honour by the Water of Jealousy, I fancy he would find us all alike. From which you may see that these remarkable Laws were cal-

B 2 culated

4 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

culated only for *Jews*, and are a very *unchristian Practice*.

Excommunications *ipso facto* have been thought by many to be excessively severe, but we never find, as I remember, in the Constitutions or Canons of any, except the *Jewish* established Church, a Sentence of Excommunication passed for natural Defects; be it as it may, it appears at first Sight irreconcilable to Reason; — if we can rescue the Text, so; if not, we are at Liberty to suspend our Assent.

This Text seems generally to be misunderstood, or rather not understood at all; and, indeed, how should it be otherwise? The Virgin blushes, bites her Lips, and, with humph and ha, proceeds to the next Verse. — The Student laughs, and winks upon

upon his Chum, while the grave Doctor calls to Order with a Semi-sneer upon his Countenance.—The Buck never troubles his Head about the Bible; if he did, I conceive he would make no other Remark than, D—me, *Jack*, what's the Meaning of this? Egad, a plaguy Circumstance;—*Jack*, take Care of the main Chance.

Harm and Scorn, my Friends, generally go Hand in Hand, but we should esteem it an intolerable Hardship to hang a Man for being hungry, to drown him for being thirsty, or burn him at a Stake for no other Reason than his being wet and cold; and pray where's the Difference if we debar him from Church Privileges only because he is, by some Accident or other, deprived, as a certain Princess observed, of the

6. LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

enchancing Pleasures of this present World. But though this Prohibition may at first seem strange and unaccountable, it will perhaps appear more reasonable upon second Thoughts; for, as *Butler* tells us, Men are not always circumcised by the Priest, or upon a religious Account. There are three Ways by which a Man may possibly be brought into the Circumstances mentioned in my Text, viz. By his own Default; by the Hands of others; or by the Act of God. If wounded or maimed by a bungling Surgeon, the remote Cause, as Metaphysicians say, may probably be himself, and Punishment, according to the wise Man's very judicious Observation, may leap out of Transgression;—but if disqualified through the Act or Permission of Almighty God, be it known, that God may

B 3

dis-

LECTURE I. 7

disqualify whom he pleases, and can no more be blamed for shutting such a one out of the Congregation, than for denying some People in high Life the literary Qualifications of a Country Curate.

An intelligent Preacher, my Friends, has generally his Answer ready before he starts his Objection; should a Respondent, therefore, rise and say, that a Man may come disfigured into the World; I grant it, though we seldom see Men at Years of Maturity who were born *maimed* or *wounded*, and I think still fewer brought into the World with their Members *cut off*. Such a Production, should it ever happen, must, however, be considered as the Act of God; but Men are most commonly wounded by rushing madly into Places of Danger,

8 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

and if so, must certainly take the
Consequence upon their own Tails.

But may not a battered Beau, then,
enter the Christian Congregation? To
which I answer with another Query,
— Is he fit for a Priest? Is a Person
educated in a Brothel proper for a
public Instructor of Mankind? Is
the Voice of an Eunuch suited for
Rhetoric and Oratory? Would his
Conversation be agreeable to the
Ladies? his Example imitated by
Christians? or his Conduct in any
Shape admired by his Auditors, after
it was openly buzz'd about, that he
had been a voluntary Proficient, and
so great a one in the abominable
Operations of *France* and *Italy*?

A Boy happens to be born without
a Thumb, or with a round Foot, or

to

LECTURE I. 9

to be wounded or maimed as in the Text; his Friends immediately cry, Make a Clergyman of him — Why so? — Because he's fit for nothing else, Sir. — And is he fit for that? — Offer him now to your Governor, will his Lordship accept him? Accept him, for what, Sir? — His Butler, — don't you see the Impropriety? — A Clerk in the Office, Sir? 'Tis the Thumb of his Right Hand. — His Footman, then? — You mean his Horseman, Sir. — Make him his Chaplain, the Lad has Parts. No, no, his Lordship declares for Voice and Action, and a squeaking italianized Prig of a Parson would be hissed even in a polite dissenting Audience.

The Knowledge of Mankind has
been represented as essentially neces-
sary

10 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

fary to making a Figure in Life, and that a Preacher thus qualified may be more useful than otherwise; but give me leave to tell you, without a *double Entendre*, that the Knowledge of Womankind is abundantly more advantageous: I have read of a Candidate who kissed the Voters Wives with Guineas in his Mouth; this was a Home Stroke, and had there been no Oath against Bribery, nor any Crime in Corruption, the Device was excellent; so that I verily believe he would have got a Seat in the House; but such barefaced Policy is indeed culpable, and I only commend him, as our Blessed Lord commended the unjust Steward, because he did wisely, (though he cheated his Master) for the Children of this World are wiser in their Generation than the Children of Light.

This

LECTURE I. PART II

as This is downright Daubing, or, as *Collier* in his *Essays* observes, 'tis laying it on with a Trowel; but, however, would you carry your Point with the Gentleman, begin first of all with the Lady of the House. — You must plow with *Sampson's* Heifer, if you expect to find out his Riddle, otherwise you are like him who begins at the Top of a Tree to fell it; she opposes you because you did not consult her; and if so, your Scheme and Schemer both in an Instant drop together unavoidably to the Ground.

An Eunuch (setting aside criminal Indulgencies, which I by no means allow,) is not qualified to carry a Cause with the Ladies so well as a Person possessed of Virility — There is something in Manhood more striking

12 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

ing and impressive; as the other has not the same Feelings, he cannot express himself with that Fire and Force; he grows feeble and effeminate, unfit for the manly Duties of Life, and a very unsuitable Person in any Communion for a Member of the Society *de propaganda Fide*.

That any Man should be excluded the Number of the Faithful, through natural Defects, is preposterous—It is, indeed, reasonable, that an enfeebled Eunuch should not meddle with the Offerings of the Sanctuary, because it might expose Religion to Contempt, and, instead of procuring that Regard and Reverence due to pious Institutions, might lay them open to Prophanation and Prostitution. The serious and solemn Exercise
of

LECTURE LXXIII

of Divine Worship is a sacred thing, and should be guarded from *Levity* and *Ridicule* with the most assiduous Care. But though an Eunuch must not enter into the Congregation to do Duty, I think I can recommend a Congregation into which he might enter, and be useful, and which would suit him extremely well, *viz.* the Society of MONTHLY REVIEWERS; where, though unable to propagate his Species, he may assume an Authority to sneer and snarl, to carp and cavil at, to censure and criticize, or hector and domineer at pleasure, over the Offspring of others. But hush!—Meddle not with cold Iron, says *Hudibras*—it cuts sharp—Right; and, therefore, as the Sailor paid for his Curse before he d—m'd the Bench of Justices, or as the Woman hastily called her Neighbour

W—re,

14 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

Were, for fear of the same Compliment, I am determin'd to be beforehand with them, and slash them, before they can have a Thrust at me.

But not to digress.—This Text is an Emblem of Purity in Heart and Life; one whose mental Conceptions are habitually impure, is a very improper Attendant upon Religious Assemblies; he may be wrought upon, it is true, which is the only Plea that can be offered;—but he much oftener, I apprehend, disturbs the Devotion of others, than edifies himself. I am inclined to think, upon the Whole, that his Presence does more Hurt than Good, and that the Congregation of the Lord would be much happier without him than with him; however, if he can prevail upon

LECTURE I. 5

upon himself to behave with Propriety and Decency, I have no Objection to his entering the outward Court, though it is evident he is not fit for the Communion of Saints, till he has, in some Measure, obtained the Forgiveness of his Sins.

Under the Law, where outward Observances represented the inward Sentiments of the Mind, a Pair of Turtle Doves, or two young Pigeons, or the tenth Part of an Ephah of fine Flour, offered by a poor Man, was of equal Value with the Blood of Bulls and Goats offered by the Rich, and were figurative, under that Dispensation, of our serving God under the *Christian* Institution with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient Heart.

The

16 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

The *Jewish*, however, differed greatly from the *Christian* Economy, at least as we have modeled it in these later Ages. If a Priest among the *Jews* happened, though ever so much against his Will, to be wounded or maimed as in my Text, he was excluded from doing Duty in the Congregation.—But a Man may now be a very considerable Person in *Christian* Societies, though he has every Limb and Member about him in full Vigour, and voluntarily exerts them to seduce the Unwary, and to subserve the most vile and ignoble Purposes.

That a Man should call himself Noble, who lives in a continued Series of Fornication and Adultery, who keeps a Mistress, as he calls her, [in Leap-Year Language, a
W—e,]

LECTURE I. 17

W—e,] for thirty or forty Years together, without any seeming Remorse of Conscience, is an astonishing Instance of Infatuation ! a plain Sign that such a Man never reads his *Bible*, and has lost Sight of the Difference between Good and Evil. As soon may the *Protestant* Religion flourish under a *Popish* Government, as practical Purity and Virtue increase among the lower Orders of Mankind, while those in high Life set such a glaring Example of Dissipation and Profaneness. But as Vice will always defeat its own Purposes, and bring a Scourge upon itself, we shall leave every Right Honourable Sinner, with every ungodly and immoral Minister of *Christ*, an eternal Solecism upon their high sounding Titles and Characters, *flattering*

C

them-

18 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

*themselves in their own Eyes, until
their Iniquity be found to be hate-
ful.*

If we may judge from the *Tête à Têtes* among People of *Fashion*, or *Distinction* if you think that Term more expressive, it appears as if those in the Upper Ranks of Life were under no Ecclesiastical Cognizance at all. I have, indeed, attended the Archdeacon's Visitation for several Years, but never saw any except a Parcel of poor [W—s,] Mistresses as they are called, attending for Penance Orders, and bargaining to get them as cheap as possible, dodging and haggling for their Souls Good, through Fear of being forever shut out of the Congregation of the Lord.

Purity

Purity of Heart and Life is, how-
 even, an essential Article; a funda-
 mental Principle, both in the *Jewish*
 and in the *Christian* Churches: Their
 Offerings were to be without Blemish,
 —* their Priests without Blemish:—
 Their Proselytes, though admitted
 into religious Assemblies, were de-
 barred from full Communion with
 the Commonwealth of *Israel*; and
Jews, if maimed, wounded, or dis-
 figured as in the Text, were dis-
 qualified for all the Offices and Em-
 ployments in Government; able Men
 were to be provided for these Pur-
 poses, such as feared God—Men of
 Truth,—hating Covetousness; and
 they were likewise to abstain from
 that barbarous Custom of making
 Eunuchs, which, though common

* Lev. xxi. 15, &c.

20 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

among the Heathen, was an unjustifiable Practice, making Men base, effeminate, and cowardly, and, by consequence, unfit for Officers either in Church or State. Now, though they were sometimes vested with Authority among the *Gentiles*, it had an evident Tendency to reflect Dishonour upon a State, and render Government ridiculous, as those Officers would probably be, for the most part, despised by the People, and their Administration treated with Contempt and Infamy. The *Ammonite* and the *Moabite* were, for a particular Reason, more solemnly and expressly excepted against than other Nations; and in Proportion as their Filthiness and Abominations were greater, the Children of *Israel* were cautioned not to mix or incorporate with those People.

LECTURE I. 21

People. Thus were the *Jews* guarded against *Heathenish* Practices; and whether *Christians* have a greater Toleration for Licentiousness in these later Ages, judge ye.

A 2. James was going up to hear his sheep, a Time generally devoted to Mirth and Feasting, he took upon that as a more honourable Title, for I would not depart from the use of gentle and fashionable Language, though the Bible of which we want a new Translation, calls him *James* and *James*; I say, he was joined a *James* or *James*, as it is called in the *Book of Revelation*; but I think I shall be my Lady in the *Book of Revelation* will not

C 3 LEC

12 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

LECTURE H.

Gen. XXXVIII. 13.

And Judah said, ~~Let her take it to her,~~
lest we be shamed.

AS Judah was going up to shear his Sheep, a Time generally devoted to Mirth and Festivity, he spied a *Mistress*, or a *Madam* if you look upon that as a more honourable Title, for I would not depart from the Use of genteel and fashionable Language, though the Bible, of which we want a new Translation, calls them *Whores* and *Harlots*; I say, he there spied a *Mistress*, or *Madam*, muffled up to the Eyes through Fear of a Discovery; but ~~Jean~~ being as good as my Lady in the Dark, that Circumstance was not

not material; upon which he turned aside unto her by the Way, desirous to make an immediate Assignment, and addressed her, without any further Compliments, with, Madam, shall I—come in—to you?

This Lady, though he knew nothing of the Matter, was *Tamar*, his Daughter-in-law; she had married *Err*, his First-born, a wicked Fellow, who had probably learned some ungodly Pranks from his Mother's *Canaanitish* Relations; but he that as it may, a merciful God thought proper to destroy him; upon which her Father-in-law advised his younger Son to comply with a Custom at that Time established, of raising up Seed to their Brethren.—This young Gentleman's Name was *Onan*, a comical conceited Good-for-nothing

24 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

as ever lived; he knew the Seed would be none of his, and rather than give it his Brother, chose to throw it away. It is probable, however, that this was not the first Time he had been guilty of the heinous Sin of Self-pollution, a Crime detestable both in its Nature and Consequences, and which has been justly and severely condemned even by Heathen Writers; a Practice probably derived from the *Canaanites*, for whose Filthiness and Abomination the Land spued out its Inhabitants, and for which God appeared to be so displeased with him, that he slew him also.

Judab then advised *Tamar* to remain a Widow at her Father's House, till his Son *Shelab* was grown; but it appears by the Sequel, that her

Father-

Father-in-Law put her off with Hopes of a Marriage, which he never intended to fulfil; for he seems, by the middle Clause of the eleventh Verse, to think that his Son's Marriage with her had been the Cause of their untimely Death. Thus forward are the Generality of Mankind to throw the Blame from them and theirs; but, *be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a Man sows that shall he also reap.*

Upon this, Tamar put off her Widow's Weeds, covered herself with a Veil, and, thus wrapped up, way-laid Judah in his Road to Timnath.— It seems as if her chief Design was upon Shelah; but when that could not be brought about, like Lot's Daughters, she was willing to preserve Seed of her Father-in-Law.

In

26 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

In return, therefore, to his Question, she answered in the common Language of common Prostitutes, demanding what he would give her.— A Kid from the Flock, says *Judab*: But as Gallants are slippery Gentlemen, and not always to be trusted, she insisted upon a Pledge, till he could send his Kid.— This was the very Thing she wanted.— No Wit like the Wit of a Woman.— She got his Pledge.— And this Pledge saved her Life when she proved with Kid by him. *Tamar* then slipped away, and having staid there only while *Judab* passed by, the Men of the Place had taken no Notice of her; so that when his Friend *Hirah*, the *Adullamite*, came to redeem his Pledge, the Woman was gone; and enquiring of the Neighbours what was become of the

Mistress,

LECTURE II. 27

Mistress, or *Madam*, that sat by the Way-side; they told him there had been no *Mistress*, or *Madam*, there, which he reported to *Judab*.

This properly brings in the Words of my Text; *And Judab said, Let her take it to her, lest she be shamed; and make no further Enquiry, lest the Men of the Place smother the Matter, and we be laughed at.* Shamed and laughed at, indeed! A good Jest enough for the Sheep-shearers at *Timnath*; it would have helped them with the Fleeces off, and have afforded sufficient Merriment for the Season.—What dost think, Brother, says one of them to his Fellow-Shearer;—our Master played the Fool in *Israel* this Morning; he picked up a Whore as he came to *Timnath*, and promised to send her in a Bit of warm

28 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES:

warm Flesh for Dinner, in Return for that he received of her after Breakfast; but she, not daring to trust him after the Sport was over, obliged him to give her his Signet, his Bracelets, and his Staff for a Pledge, before he humbled her, with which, as the Lord liveth, he foolishly complied; and now, God do so to me and more also, if the Woman be not run away with them.

If the Signet and Bracelets were of more Value than the Kid, *Judah* chose rather to lose them than be exposed;—if of less Value, like *Mrs. Cole* in the *Minor*, he was determined to keep a good Conscience: *Behold I sent this Kid, and thou hast not found her.* However, let the Value be as it would, the Kid was for Food, the Bracelets, &c. for Ornament,

ment, and if she chuses the latter, let her take them to her; make no farther Enquiry, lest they smell a Rat.

As Tatlers and Busy-bodies were the same in every Age, it was told *Tamar* that *Judab* had a Sheep-shearing, and it was likewise told *Judab*, that *Tamar* had played the *Mistress*, and was with Child by an Affair with somebody or other.—Bring her out, says *Judab*, and let her be burnt.

Why so, good Mr. *Judab*? Are not you as deep in the Affair as *Tamar*? Oh, Sir!—THE HONOUR OF MY FAMILY!—Besides—a Lady to be guilty of —— intolerable! I say bring her out, and let her be burnt.—The Lady was brought forth,

But why all this Heat and Passion, Sir? Don't you remember,
about

30 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

about three Months ago, — as you went up to *Timnath*? Do you know whose these are? The Signet, the Bracelets, and the Staff? View them narrowly, perhaps you may know them again: Have you never seen them before? O *Judah*! *Judah*! but I perceive your Countenance drops. — Not a Word more of Burning; say — Was you or *Tamar* more to be blamed? — *Ans.* — She hath been more righteous than I, and I am determined never to go in — to her again: — It is not fit you should, and in that Point you and I are agreed!

Tamar having extorted this ingenuous Confession from *Judah*, by producing the Pledge, it appeared, that, instead of degrading, she had been attempting to keep up the Ho-

nor

near of his Family, (for it was a
Disgrace in that Age to be childless;)
whereas he, contrary to the Custom
of the Country, had dishonoured his
Family by neglecting to give her a
Wife as he had intimated, and as was
required by the Law of God, to
begeth his Son.

But what must we say, Mr. Pa-
triarch, in regard to your Fornica-
tion? Pho! say our modern Bucks
and *Beaux Esprits*, what's Fornication
in a fine Gentleman?—You know
we claim Liberties, which Ladies
must not pretend to;—Things may
be wrong in them which are right in
us—That is, the Men say so.—But
I can assure you, Gentlemen, your
very fine Ladies are determined not to
take either your or any Man's *ipse
dixit* for a Rule of Life any longer.

Sin

32 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

Sin and Shame, Mr. *Patriarch*, generally go together, or the latter immediately succeeds the former.— Was not Fornication a deadly Sin in your Church? — it is called so in our's; and I think I have read something like it in your's, where it is said, that a Bastard shall not enter into the Congregation of the Lord to his tenth Generation.—Our modern Men of Pleasure make a Handle of the Example you have set them— If this venerable Patriarch, say they, picked up a Mistress in the Lane, I shall hardly be d—n'd if I pick up one in the Street; — and the poor sinking Remains of Virtue in a conscientious Lady have been baffled with, My dear Life, have you never read of *Solomon*? — the wisest Man in in the World! — Did you never read of *Judab* the Patriarch, how he went
a Sheep-

LECTURE III. 33

a Sheep-shearing to *Timnath*?—You must have read of *David*,—the Man after God's own Heart;—and of *Abram*, the Father of the Faithful, who, as *Horace* says,

— Was not afraid
To kiss his blooming Servant-maid.

Fair and softly, quoth a grave Divine; “you burlesque and ridicule Holy Church, as well as the Sacred Writings of Inspiration—You make too free with the Characters therein contained, and with the Infirmities of great and good Men, whose very Sins and Foibles should be mentioned with Veneration.” Am I, then, an Advocate for Vice?—Nothing less; but I will be bold to say, that the Mischief occasioned by Examples of this Kind has been, in a great Measure, owing to the Sanction of

D

Hypo-

34 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

Hypocritical Cant. *Sir Richard Lovelace*, in the Play, drew this fatal Consequence, when his Father-in-Law urged mollifying Arguments in favour of his Daughter's Chaplain, who happened accidentally to get drunk;—"Fine Doctrine, indeed, says he—A Sin in us, but none in *Parson Noddy*." And *Ralobo* makes the same Observation to *Hudibras*.

That Saints may do the same things by The Spirit in Sincerity, Which other Men are tempted to, And at the Devil's Instance do: And that thing that is pious in The one, in t'other is a Sin.

In a Word, my grave Friends, be cautious, lest you injure the Cause you attempt to vindicate;—let me tell you freely, that sanctified Aims and

and Graces will never extenuate or excuse for Immorality; Vice is Vice in every Character; there is no such Thing as an indelible Sanctity annexed to the Persons or Offices of Men. Right and Wrong are eternal and invariable; and if Fornication was a Sin in the Jewish Church, as appears plain from the Hebrew Text, *Judab* was most certainly guilty of it;—but I shall state the Case fairly, and you may judge for yourselves. Fornication may be proved a sinful and shameful Practice, even in the Patriarchal Era; yet *Judab* seems to take no Notice of the Crime, but only mentions the Shame. — Was it, then, no Sin in *Judab*?—It certainly was one, of which he could not be insensible. See *Lev. xxi. 7. Deut. xxii. 21. and Deut. xxiii. 17, 18.* where it is expressly said, there shall

36 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

be no WHORE of the Daughters of Israel; and a Word in your Ear— if there were no Whores, there could be no Wh—re-masters, for which Reason Solomon, in the Book of Proverbs, gives them a sorry Character, and persuades young Fellows, whose Passions are generally strong, to take Wives. *Let thy Wife be as the loving Hind, says he, and pleasant Roe; let her Breasts satisfy thee at all Times, and be thou ravished always with her Love.—And why wilt thou, my Son, be ravished with a strange Woman, and embrace the Bosom of a Stranger? For the Ways of Man are before the Eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his Goings.—His own Iniquities shall take the Wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the Cords of his Sins.—He shall die without Instruction, and in the Greatness of his Folly he shall*

LECTURE II. 37

shall go astray. Prov. v. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

It was therefore a Sin in *Judab*, and is a Sin in every one who practises the same; for though Polygamy and Concubinage were, for wise Reasons, tolerated in the Infancy of the World; yet Adultery and Fornication were always stigmatized with a Brand of Infamy. Some have, indeed, imagined, that Vice is the same in every Age, and has no Dependence upon Time and Circumstance; but this Opinion is grounded upon a Mistake, being only true in regard to a particular Class.

Usury, for Instance, was a Sin amongst the *Jews*, but it was none among the *Gentiles*.—Thus were all Breaches of the Ceremonial Law; and though Polygamy and Concu-

38 LEAP YEAR LECTURES.

binage be discountenanced under the
Christian Institution, as inconsistent
 with superior Purity, yet they are
 not simply unlawful in their own
 Nature, as Theft and Murder, nor
 were they, under certain Restrictions,
 imputed to the ancient Patriarchs,
 for Unrighteousness. So likewise,
 by the Law of *Moses*, if a Man lay
 with a Woman before Marriage, he
 must pay Money according to the
 Doty of Virgins, provided her Fa-
 ther utterly refused to let him marry
 her. *Exodus xxiii 16, 17.* From
 which it is natural to infer, that
 though the promiscuous Use of
 Women was always chargeable with
 Sin and Shame, yet the Crime is
 greatly aggravated under much clearer
 Displays of Light and Knowledge —
 Light is come into the World —
 more Talents are given — and by
 Confe-

Consequence more are expected back.

It was a Fault in *Judah*, of which he, no doubt, was sensible, but abundantly more shocking and detestable under the grand and awful Discoveries of *Christianity*; it was blameable in an *Israelite*, under that childish Dispensation, where they were chiefly guided by Sight and Sense, and governed by temporal Motives and Rewards, but inexcusable in those guided by a more spiritual Principle, and favoured with the brightest Prospects of future Glory, Honour, and Immortality.

LECTURE III.

RUTH III. 14.

And he said, Let it not be known that a Woman came into the Floor.

THE Story of *Ruth* is a very natural and striking Picture of a distressed Mother. The Scenes are incomparably fine, the Plot well laid, and the whole Tragi-comedy, if I may so call it, carried on with Exactness and Propriety; the Design of it is to shew, that Chance and Providence are the same.—It was *Ruth's* Hap to light on a Part of the Field belonging to *Boaz*, yet Providence seems concerned in keep-
ing

LECTURE III. 41

ing up the Genealogy of our Lord
by this memorable Transaction.

In discoursing from these Words,
my worthy and much-respected
Friends, I shall endeavour to shew,

— That a good Name, though better
than Riches, may be utterly black-
ened by the Tongue of Defamation,
and even Innocence itself aspersed
with ill-natured Investives, if we
enter into unwarrantable Connections
with unreasonable and wicked Men.

That it by necessary Consequence
becomes our Interest to avoid bad
Company, and to converse in a fami-
liar Manner with those, and those
only, who merit the Denomination
of Wise and Good.

“ Though you be virtuous, take
Care that your Conduct be not liable

to

42 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

to suspicion," is a wife, prudent, and undisputed Maxim; and if I remember right, one of the *Cæsars* said, He would not only have his Wife virtuous, but unsuspected also. — Now when a Lady does any Thing that gives Umbrage, either to her Husband or the World, she certainly acts an unwarrantable Part; and if she suffers, though ever so innocent, in Fact does not suffer without some Desert. — Even the other Sex, who stile themselves Lords of the Creation, are under an Obligation to Decorum in Appearances; Let it not be known, that a Woman came into the Floor,

All the City of my People dole know,
says Boaz, that thou art a virtuous Woman. — We believe it. — We believe that Naomi and Ruth were not
only

only virtuous in the moral, but in the religious Sense of the Word; yet a pious Commentator in Effect argues, that *Humanum est errare*—Nobody without Infirmities—No Perfection on this Side the Grave—Women are but Women, after all—Though, by the Way, Women as a People are generally found to have a greater Stock of ready Wit than Men; and as innocent Policy is commendable, we shall endeavour, in some Measure at least, to wipe off the Asperion which has been cast upon these Women of Honour, as if they acted a Part not only irregular and imprudent, but inconsistent with Scripture Purity, unwarrantable, indecent, unnecessary, and what not.

Innocent Policy, if it succeeds, is excellent, or at least excuseable; though

44 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

though if unsuccessful, malicious People are always forward enough to attack it on the weak Side. Had *Naomi's* Intelligence of Human Nature failed her, she had been taxed with double Indiscretion, and her Character torn to pieces without Mercy; as the Case happened, it was a tolerable Story, for Providence is called in to sanctify the Fact, and the Means ranked among the Frailties incident to Humanity. However, fortunate or unfortunate, successful or otherwise, the Case is still the same, which I shall endeavour to place in a proper Light.—*Ruth* was a dutiful Daughter, and *Naomi* a compassionate Mother; but when Poverty stares us in the Face, it may sometimes be laudable to lay aside Punctilios, and while we maintain Integrity within, run the Risque of ill-

ill-natured Censures from an undiscerning World.

This was exactly the Case with *Naomi*; the Experiment she advised her Daughter to make, if put into rash and inconsiderate, instead of calm and deliberate Execution, had indeed been an Act of great Imprudence. — But she was thoroughly acquainted with the Sobriety, Age, and pious Deportment of *Boaz*, and likewise with the Modesty and Virtue of *Ruth*; — *To the Pure all things are pure.* — The Parties concerned were People of strict Honour, and what might otherwise have turned out to the Shame and Confusion of all Three, being built upon the Foundation of Virtue, terminated in their Peace, Comfort, Satisfaction, Contentment, and universal Happiness.

which

If

46 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

If I may be permitted to digress, or rather moralize a little — this Story, considered in all its Consequences, and in all the Possibility of Effects which such a Story might produce, gives us a lively Picture of the Generality of Mankind. — Some advanced to the highest Pinnacle of Wealth and Honour, from Causes which, had they miscarried, might have ruined the Reputation of the Actors to all Intents and Purposes, and which, if enquired into, we shall find have destroyed Characters, perhaps as amiable as those in the Text. — A Lady, for instance, destitute of good Sense, good Nature, and good Breeding, exposes Trifles light as Air, and construes the most innocent Freedoms as an Attack upon her Virtue; censures Appearances, and calls Imprudence, which

which loses its Name among the Good and Virtuous, an High Middle-
 meanor. — For what is Imprudence,
 my Friends? In the strict Sense of
 the Word, among the Wise and
 Well-disposed it stands for a Cypher,
 and owes its Existence entirely to
 the Weakness of Mankind. Among
 pure and upright Spirits, Caution
 loses its Force. There is an eternal
 Difference indeed between Right and
 Wrong; but Prudence is the Child
 of Frailty and Imperfection, and is
 only necessary in a degenerate State.

When we, therefore, see great Cau-
 tion and Circumspection used, we
 may be sure the cautious Person is
 either weak and wicked himself, or
 suspects others of Weakness and
 Wickedness. The best of Men, 'tis
 true, may be imposed upon, but
 the

48 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

the good Man will not easily believe a bad Report, will not judge by Appearances, but will judge by righteous Judgment; and though some Degree of Caution is necessary among the most Virtuous, as the Relicks of Frailty are never entirely removed; yet as abundantly less is necessary among the Wise and Good, we may be sure none at all is necessary among those, if any such existed, who are absolutely perfect. But to return to my Subject: *Boaz* appears to have been not only a mighty Man of Wealth, but a Person of great Integrity—his Conduct was diametrically opposite to that of a vain and conceited *Coxcomb*—his Salutation to his Reapers is very pretty, he smiles and looks pleasant upon his Workmen, and they seem to answer him in the

Lan-

LECTURE III. 49

Language of Sincerity. — Some Expositors tell us that *Ruth's* Behaviour was immodest, and that *Naomi's* Contrivance had the Appearance of Evil. — True — among the Sons and Daughters of *Belial*; but *Honi soit qui mal y pense* — Evil be to him that Evil thinks. — Upright *Boaz* entertained the same Opinion of her as before; nor did it at all lessen her in his Esteem. — *All the City of my People doth know*, says he, *that thou art a virtuous Woman* — A Person of less Integrity would, perhaps, have called her a pert Hussy, and have viewed it in the Light of a lascivious Deportment; but it evinces *Boaz* to have been a Person not only of Religion, but of the best Sense; he took the Act as it was intended. *Blessed*, says he, *be thou of the Lord, my Daugbter, for thou*

—; *mena*

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hast

50 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

hast shewed more Kindness at the latter End than at the Beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young Men, whether Poor or Rich.

I never read this Example of Boaz, but I reverence his Character with profound Veneration; his Sentiments are just, his Reasoning strong; a native Simplicity runs through all his Conversation; and if ever there was a good Man upon Earth, I pronounce once more that it was honest Boaz.

But why should Boaz give the Caution in my Text, *Let it not be known that a Woman came into the Floor?* Because a Man would not chuse to have his Cause tried in Hell, and the Devil fit Judge—or by a Parcel of old conceited Maids, with an antiquated Prude at the Head of them;—

LECTURE III. 51

them ;—or by a Jury of abandoned Libertines, with a Debauchee for Steward of the Court ;—they would soon have made it a matter of bad Report indeed. — Have you heard what happened to old *Boaz* the other Night, after he had winnowed his Barley ?—Why, what of him ? Nay, nothing but many an honest Man's Fault. His Heart, they say, was merry with Liquor ; he loves, it seems, a pretty Wench in a Corner, and got a nice Bit to himself when the Company was gone.—Do, let us know how it was. Why, to make short of the Matter, he was seen with a handsome young Woman upon the Floor, at Midnight, and his Lap over her, that's all. The God of *Abram*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* only can tell, but you and I may guess what followed.—A good honest - hearted

52 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

old Soul he is as ever breathed, but it's all over the Town that the young *Moabitish* Widow went in to lie with him, and that he gave her six Measures of Barley at parting, which he tied up in her Apron, and laid upon her Shoulder, for he was so kind as to help her up with it.—Ha! ha! ha! — The young Woman, indeed, left him cunningly, while it was so dark that one Person could not know another, but it happened there were some People as knowing as herself. — This Conversation, we must own, has a bad Appearance, and therefore with good Reason *Boaz* cautioned her, in the Words of my Text, *Let it not be known that a Woman came into the Floor.*

Upon Common Fame then the Verdict would go against them.—But pray,

pray, my Dear, says I, to a celebrated Beauty, which Way do you think *Ruth's* Behaviour was of bad Report?—Don't you think it imprudent, replied she, for a young Woman to go to Bed with an old Fellow?—In some Respects, Madam.—Aye, but says she, laughing, Don't you think it had a bad Appearance?—No, Madam.—O fye, for Shame! rejoined the Lady.—Madam, I beg ten thousand Pardons; I understand you now. My Stupidity is amazing. I perceive it is your Opinion, that a young Woman cannot go to Bed to an old Fellow but she must be — known by him;—which, I assure you, did not enter into my Thoughts, and which I have good Reason to believe is not always the Case,

54 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

Well, but, says a critical Expofitor, who has, perhaps, tortured the *Hebrew* Particles, and ftudied the *Talmud*, the *Targum*, or *Chaldee* Paraphrafe, with other Rabbinical Writings, for Years together, there was a Kinfman nearer than *Boaz*, whom *Naomi* could not but know.— It was his Right to redeem, and, therefore, an Application to *Boaz* feems inconfiftent with Honesty; but *Boaz*, being a mighty Man of Wealth, could maintain a Wife, it is highly probable, much better than the other.—Women are of a mercenary Difpofition, and generally marry more for Intereft than Love, upon which Account we may fuppose *he* was the Object of *her* Choice; this bears hard upon *Naomi's* Character. The Charge, however, may poffibly have no Foundation, and
 prove

LECTURE III. 35

prove one among the many far fetched groundless Conceits and imaginary Notions that abound in the contradictory, inconsistent, and therefore insignificant and useless Performances of our modern Commentators. A Word whose Derivation may be, as the School Boy observed, from *Com pro Con, Euphoniae Gratia*, together, and *mentior*, to tell Lies.

The Truth is, *Boaz* was one of their next Kinmen, and in the Margin of our Bibles, it is said he was one who had a Right to redeem. — He had taken particular Notice of *Ruth*, and seemed inclinable to be a Friend, had comforted and spoken kindly to her, — had charged the young Men that they should not touch her, and that if she gleaned even among the Sheaves they should

36 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

not reproach or rebuke her — but should leave some Handfuls on Purpose for her to gather; — That she should eat and drink with him and his Reapers; — keep Company with his Maidens, and not go glean in another Man's Field; declaring, at the same Time, that he did this out of Regard to her religious and moral Character, knowing her, as every one else did, to be a virtuous, well-behaved young Woman. — Thus encouraged, her Mother-in-Law proposed Measures for seeing her well settled in the World, and the Method propounded was nothing more than to take an Opportunity, when Boaz was in a chearful and contented Frame of Mind, to ask his Advice. *Go in unto him,* says her Mother-in-Law, *and he will tell thee what will be proper for thee to do.*

It

It is evident, then, that *Naomi* proposed this Method as a Consultation Scene;—we cannot pronounce with Certainty that she knew the Kinsman to whom the prior Right of Redemption belonged, it being difficult, in many Cases, for Women to understand the precise Rules of Consanguinity; we may, therefore, I think, safely conclude, that she was ignorant of the Heir at Law, took *Boaz* to be the Man, or, at least, thought him the most proper Person to advise with in an Affair so nice and delicate, and of such considerable Importance to the future Welfare and Prosperity of her Daughter.

From what has been said, it appears that *Boaz* was a near Kinsman, that he had acknowledged them as Relations, and had not left off his Kindness

58 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

ness either to the Living or the Dead, and though they might act without his Consent, it was highly proper for them to ask his Advice.—It would have been more immodest in her to have claimed from a Relation, with whom she had no Acquaintance, the Performance of a Kinsman's Part, and have pleaded publickly that the Right of Redemption was vested in him.—She might, indeed, have demanded this by the Law of *Moses*, and had he refused, through Fear of marring his Inheritance, or through Fear of any thing, have loosed* his Shoe, and spit in his Face; have exposed, reproached, and rendered him a Byeword among his People; but extreme Right is extreme Wrong, and she modestly chose this private Me-

* Dent. xxv. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

thod of claiming her Privilege, which, had they both refused, it is highly probable she had no Intention of entering a Prosecution to the utmost Rigour and Severity of Law. It was Modesty that prompted her and her Mother-in-Law to this silent and secret Adventure; and though the Sons of *Belial* may turn any Thing into Ridicule, there was nothing that I can perceive amiss or inconsistent with Chastity in this innocently - political, useful, and well concerted Measure. But it is objected that such a Step might have given *Boaz* a mean Opinion of her, and have been a Means of alienating instead of securing his Affection. — Had *Boaz* been like some of your Modern fine Gentlemen, I allow the Objection in its full Force; but, as I observed before, he was a Man of Honour,

60 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

Honour, in the strict Sense of the Word, a Person of exquisite good Sense, and had a true metaphysical Idea of the Springs and Principles of *Ruth's* Behaviour. With a bad Man it might have produced that Effect, with a good Man it was natural to produce the Consequence it did.

That it might have proved a Temptation to *Boaz*, is saying little to the Purpose, and is answered in my Answer to the last Objection.

In short, *Ruth* did nothing more than her Mother-in-law commanded, and her Mother-in-law commanded nothing that appeared wrong or unjustifiable. What is well taken is generally well given, and many Things are no otherwise ill given, than by being ill received. She used

no

LECTURE III. 61

no wanton Words, or alluring Gestures, the common Provocatives to Vice and Folly, but declared her Temperance and Modesty, by seeking to unite herself to her Husband's next Kinsman, following no flighty or frothy young Men, whether poor or rich; she had left her Kindred, her Country, and her Gods, and was become a Worshiper of the God of *Abram, Isaac, and Jacob*, who is no Respector of Persons, and who rejects none from the Privileges of his House and People but through Want of Sincerity: To conclude, *Boaz* was not in the least offended at her, but commends her Virtue without even the Shadow of Reflection; and we must do her and her Mother-in-law the Justice to say, that they paid a solemn Regard to the Name and Memory of the Dead. And the Method
they

62 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

they took to claim what belonged to them, by the Laws of God and their Country; was as private and inoffensive as the Nature of the thing would admit. The Wisdom and Sobriety of the Parties concerned, secured them from destructive Consequences, and what might have been the Result among Libertines and Sensualists, I think not worth taking Pains at present in any Shape to delineate.

LEC.

LECTURE IV.

JOB XXXI. 1.

*I made a Covenant with my Eyes, why
then should I think upon a Maid?*

IT is a Custom with perhaps the greater Part of Mankind, to pronounce definitive Sentence, ascribing the Casualties and Afflictions of this transitory Life to the immediate Resentment of an offended Deity. *Job* appears to have suffered through these Sentiments. — His Friends came to comfort him under his Affliction, but all the Comfort they gave was what many others receive in the like Circumstances, they were severe upon his past Conduct, and, with many heavy Censures and grievous Criticisms, alledged that he was an uncommon

64 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

common Sufferer, in consequence of his having been a notorious Sinner.

That this Opinion was grounded upon a Mistake, and an ill-natured one too, is evident both from the Account we have in the Beginning and End of his History, which informs us, that he was one of that blessed Number who endured Temptation, that, when he was tried, he might receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him; and his Friends having cast unjust Imputations upon God's providential Government, and charged *Job* with Crimes of which he was totally innocent, were advised to make their Peace with him, and to procure his Intercession with the Almighty on their Behalf. *Job* xlii. 7, 8. *And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these*

LECTURE IV. 65

these Words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My Wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two Friends, for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my Servant Job hath: Therefore take unto you now seven Bullocks and seven Rams, and go to my Servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a Burnt-offering, and my Servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept; lest I deal with you after your Folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my Servant Job.

They seem, in several Respects, to have aspersed his Character, and, among other Instances, it is probable, might insinuate, that he was addicted to Women; be that as it may, he thought proper to vindicate himself from this as well as every
 F other

66 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

other Crime of an infamous and destructive Nature, and in this Chapter makes a solemn Protestation of his Integrity in several particular Duties both to God and Man.

I made a Covenant with my Eyes, says he, *why then should I think upon a Maid?* — Good old Orthodox Divinity, or Morality, if you like the Expression better; to which the modern fine Gentleman's Practice is as diametrically opposite as Light and Darkness, for the Rule at present with them is a Covenant with their Eyes to think at nothing but a Girl. — The Bible is undoubtedly the best Book in the World; for if a Man would know what he must do to be saved, the Rule is plain; and if he wants a sure Guide to Hell, it is only reversing the Text, and he

LECTURE IV: 67

is directed to those fashionable Amusements which conduct him through the wide Gate into the Broad Path that leads to Destruction.

Had Lord *Waddicallin* made a Covenant with his Eyes, he would never have thought of Miss *Popstin*. — And had Lady, I forget her Name, but no matter who, made a Covenant with her's, her Spouse would never have exhibited Articles against her in *D—E—rs C—mm—ns*; but the Plague, or Misfortune, or whatever you please to call it, is, that — some of our *IGNOBLES*, like those scornful Men who ruled in *Jerusalem*, have made a Covenant with Death, and an Agreement with Hell, and why should they scruple to perform the Conditions which serve as a Passport to the infernal Mansions.

68. LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

I would advise those fashionable Worthies, who make such an elegant Figure in the *Tête à Têtes*, to consider the different Nature and Tendency of the two Covenants; whether it is better to enter into an Indenture with the Eyes for the Security of the Heart, or into a Covenant with Death for the Destruction of the Soul? Do not imagine that your Covenant with Death, or your Agreement with Hell, your Refuge of Lies, or your Shelter of Falshood, will secure you from the overflowing Scourge; for the Prophet informs us, that it shall sweep away the Refuge of Lies, and overflow the private Haunts and distant Recesses into which you may think proper to withdraw, for the Gratification of your irregular Appetites and Passions.

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LECTURE IV. 69

If the Conscience be seared as with a hot Iron, it may possibly give you little Disturbance, though you run to an Excess of Riot, and to the frequent Repetition of every favourite Debauch; you may flatter yourselves that you are at Peace with Death and Hell, that *Beelzebub* is your Friend, — that your Mountain stands strong and shall never be moved; but your Covenant with Death, notwithstanding this, shall be disannulled, and your Agreement with Hell shall not stand. — It shall stand, indeed, to your everlasting Confusion and Dishonour, but not to that Peace, Prosperity, and Comfort, with which you have unreasonably, though very fondly, flattered yourselves.

70 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

It should be remembered that *Job* was an Eastern Prince, or Nobleman; in the distant Ages of remote Antiquity; his Arguments are clear, nervous, and pathetic, very different to those of his puny Successors, who, though dignified with Titles, do sometimes write and reason little better than the Vulgar; and it would be no Breach of Truth, if I should venture to say, sometimes not quite so well.

“If my Heart have been deceived
“by a Woman,” says this Noble Personage, (whether Maid, Wife, or Widow,) or “if I have laid wait
“at my Neighbour’s Door seeking
“for an Opportunity to dishonour
“his Bed — Then let my Wife grind
“unto another, and let others bow
“down upon her.” — An ancient
Right

LECTURE IV.

Right Honourable; you see, allows his Lady the same Liberty with himself — *Grind or find* is an old *English* Proverb; and implies, that the Mill must be kept a-going — *Brave News for the Fair Sex* — Ladies, hold your own — Let the Gentlemen exhibit Articles against you in their Ecclesiastical Courts; you have nothing to do but exhibit Articles of Recrimination; you may now sue for a Divorce *a Thoro & Mensa* with as much Spirit and Vivacity as the best of them. — Teach the unreasonable Creatures to do as they would be done unto. — No picking up a Girl now at the Theatres with Impunity — Your Mistress, and my Gallant, is become fashionable Language at the Court End of the Town: — But Ladies and Gentlemen, you are both in the Wrong. The

72 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

Patience of *You* be Witness; and, a private Hint for your Comfort, would it not be better if you were honest and faithful to each other? **Honesty is the best Policy** — Try the Experiment for once, and take a Frolic of being Good.

In the first Place, make a Covenant with your Eyes; those generally govern, or at least guide the Heart. — The Eye is an Inlet to various Thoughts — Ogling begets Desire — Desire, when it has conceived, brings forth Sin; and Sin, when it is finished, brings forth Death. *Jesus*, who talked better than ten Philosophers, tells you, that *he who looks on a Woman to lust after her hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart*; and one of his Followers observes, that there were

LECTURE IV. 73

were People in his Days who had
Eyes full of Adultery.—The Lust of
 the Eyes is pernicious to the Health
 of the Soul—But you may, per-
 haps, think me too grave—*Magna
 est Veritas et praevalabit.*

Consider, my Friends, what a
 Contrast will appear at the Day of
 Retribution, between those who have
 made a Covenant with their Eyes,
 and those who have made no Cove-
 nant at all—Human Nature is the
 same in every Man—Priest and
 People are of one Blood—Men of
 like Passions,—and 'tis a Compli-
 ance with the Dictates of Reason
 only that forms a Difference—A
 Man, you'll say, may cure his Ap-
 petites, by destroying them; so a
 Man may cure the Gout, by cutting
 off his Legs: But, perhaps, the

Re-

74 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

Remedy will be thought worse than the Disease; on the contrary, all you have to do, my worthy and valuable Friends, is to keep your Appetites in Subjection, your Passions under proper Order, Government, and Discipline; for this, give me leave to tell you, if grounded upon the Fear and Favour of Almighty God, is not only the Duty, but the whole Duty that he requires of Man.

A Clergyman of my Acquaintance, who retired from his Function to live upon secular Property some Years ago, informed me, very gravely, that he could like to keep a Mistress as well as any Gentleman in the Kingdom, but Reason and Conscience tell me, says he, that it is a vain and hurtful Practice, both in Regard to the Things of this World, and that which

is to come, I therefore made a Covenant with my Eyes; and had Job made no Covenant of that Kind, he might have relished the Embraces of some enchanting Female with as much Gust and Satisfaction as any other Nobleman in the Land of Uz.

Do you imagine the pious Sages of Antiquity were such dull Souls as to be incapable of relishing the high-seasoned Enjoyments of Life?—Do you consider the virtuous Moderns as mean and poor-spirited Wretches, destitute of Taste and Sensibility, because governed by Reason and Reflexion?—You lay them low, but it is possible they may look upon you in a different Light to what you suspect. Could you discern their Sentiments as well as your own, you'd soon perceive where the Distinction lies—

76 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

lies—The Balance is in their Favour, and your Conduct will not bear a Scrutiny, being incapable of close, solid, and strict Examination—Bring a Libertine to the Test, and he always looks like—not one of the *Bon Tons*, but one of the *Simple Tons*. I never saw one examined before his Superiors in the Course of Practice, but he appeared the most dispirited, insipid, cowardly Creature in the Universe, had either nothing to say, or, which is more to his Dishonour, nothing to the Purpose. I told Judge *X—s* that I always took *Tim* — to be a Kn—ve, but I never knew, till this Minute, that he was both Kn—ve and F—l.

O Times! O Manners! When the Devil corrects Sin, the Pot calls the Pan burnt A—se, and the M—y blame

LECTURE IV. 77

blame *W—s* for making no Covenant with his Eyes. It is really a laughable Affair, that *L—* must be Member for *M—*, because *W—s*'s Morals are not good enough for the House. —“Never a Barrel the better Herring,” was a Proverb when I was a Boy, and may remain so when I'm a Man, for the sound * Doctrine of *William-o'-Wickham* is grown obsolete, and the Wisdom of *Rehoboam* is the Wit of the Age. But what is God's Portion from Above, and the Inheritance of the Almighty from on high? — Why, that he who plows Iniquity, and sows Wickedness, should reap the same; — for He sees your Ways, He counts every Step, and if you walk with Vanity, or pursue Deceit; — if you step out of the Way, or

* Manners maketh Man.

your

58 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

your Heart walks after your Eyes; the Consequence, as *Job* affirms, is an Extinction of your Family, and an Alienation of your Property, to say nothing of H—ll and D—mn—n, which may be censured as a Methodistical Doctrine, and which, it is highly probable, you never give yourselves any Trouble about.

An honest old Country Clergyman, like the Preacher of famous Memory in the *Spectator*, though not so much of a Courtier, was one Day preaching from those Words of the Apostle, *Mortify your Members which are upon the Earth*, and, to enforce his Subject, as he knew the Character of the People he was preaching to, he slyly added—Mortify that Member in particular, which I leave you to guess at; so I say—Make a Cove-
nant

nant with your Eyes, or, if you chuse rather, with another Part which it is not good Manners to mention. Indentures are useful things, but though a Man is extremely careful to secure the Title to his Estate by good Deeds, the Title to his Soul is often lost for want of entering into a Covenant with his Eyes.

It is surprising that some needy Bookseller has not published a Bible, with Notes and Annotations, in *Usuriosae Juventutis, cum variis Lectionibus*. Methinks such a Performance would sell, for my Friend the Printer says, that good orthodox Divinity is the worst Article in his Shop, a Commodity, Sir, that nobody buys.—I shall, however, give you a Specimen of my Plan, which may perhaps turn to some Account if managed by a know-
ing

30 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

ing Hand — I assure you that Remarks of this Kind affect the Reader much more than forced Interpretations, where the *Hebrew* speaks such *Engliss* as never entered the Brain of either *Israelite* or *Briton* except the Author, and is nothing more than the fictitious Creature of critical Imagination. — *Thou shalt not commit Adultery* — In King Charles's Time it was read, "Thou shalt commit Adultery." — The Precisians, we may suppose, foisted in the Negative, but at present the general Practice is agreeable to the antient Reading. — The Text indeed stands as it has done for a considerable Time past, to the eternal Disgrace of the *Beau-monde*, just as the Articles of our Church remain *in statu quo*, though the Faith of a great Part of the Clergy professedly differs from them; so the fashionable

LECTURE IV. 81

ishionable Practice, you see, is contrary to the Text, which must remain, like old *Sternbold* and *Hopkins*, till the Parliament sees proper to alter it.

FLEE FORNICATION, says the Apostle ;—Lord *L*— reads *flee after* ;—the Right Honourable the Earl of *P*— inserts *to*, others *into*, and some read *pursue*.—Lady *H*—, indeed, puts in *from*, but her Authority is of little Weight ; and others read *avoid* ; but they are generally Authors whom nobody knows, and their Credit is so small, that I only mention them in pursuance of my primitive Design.

To conclude ; Lewd Principles denote a Man to be wicked, and filthy Practices are a general Index to the Workers of Iniquity ; Destruction, as *Job* intimates, is the Lot of the

G former,

82 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

former, and a strange Punishment the Portion of the latter. The Seduction of married Women, if we may believe this great Man of the East, was in his Age an heinous Crime, and is at present an Iniquity punishable both in the Secular and Ecclesiastical Courts.—*It is a Fire, says he, that consumes to Destruction, and would root out all mine Increase.*

When Perjury, Fornication, Adultery, and the like, prevail to a certain Degree in any Nation, a Revolution of one Kind or other is sure to ensue, for they are Vices so destructive to the Happiness of Individuals, and so inconsistent with the Welfare of Human Society, that they can only flourish and prosper for a Time. Purity and Virtue, Chastity and Honour, are the only certain and durable Cements; where

LECTURE IV. 83

where these are neglected, whether by Male or Female, the Consequence is not only ruinous and destructive in secular Affairs, but — unfits them for the Duties of Religion — conveys a poisonous Example to Posterity — extinguishes the Offspring of even noble Families — wounds the Conscience — debases the Soul — sensualizes the Affections — unfits Mankind for the Kingdom of Heaven, and qualifies them effectually for the Company of wicked Spirits, laying up in Store Fewel for future Punishment, where the Worm dies not, nor is the Fire quenched, and where they shall be an Abhorrence to all Flesh.

LECTURE V.

PROV. XXX. 18, 19.

There be three Things which are too wonderful for me, yea four which I know not; the Way of an Eagle in the Air, the Way of a Serpent upon a Rock, the Way of a Ship in the Midst of the Sea, and the Way of a Man with a Maid.

IT is not at all strange that the three Things mentioned by *Agur* were too wonderful for him, because they are too abstruse and intricate for every Body else, as it is not practicable to point out the Course before them, or to trace it after them, but the Way of the last is so obvious, that
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LECTURE V. 85

it is much more wonderful to think how a wise Man should happen to be unacquainted with it. — The Way of a Man with a Maid is, to stare — ogle — cringe — fawn — flatter — crowd her up close — discharge a Volley of Impertinence — conduct her to her Carriage — squeeze her Hand — give her a languishing Look — beg Leave to wait upon her Home, or next Day to a Dish of Coffee — tell her a thousand Lies — swear eternal Fidelity — that you are dying for her — that she looks like an Angel — that you love her to Distraction, and can't be happy without her. — Any one who is in the least acquainted with the common Run of Courtship, either in high or low Life, knows this, and he who knows nothing of it is more insensible than his Fellows. You must remember,

86 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

however, that he who made this wonderful Observation was not *Solomon*—*Solomon*, you may be sure, with his seven hundred Wives, and three hundred Concubines, knew better;—he was an *Agur*, the Son of *Jakeb*, a Man who did not so much as pretend to be a Wit, for, by his own Account, he was more brutish than any Man, and had not the Understanding of a Man, which I think we may take his Word for, if he did not know the Way of a Man with a Maid; however, this we may say of him, that he was a plain, plodding Man; he had a smattering in Natural and Moral Philosophy, but had made no great Proficiency;—he does not appear, by his Writings, to have been a first Rate Genius, — does not glitter like *Solomon*, nor so brilliant as some of the Moderns, but he was
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LECTURE V. 87

an honest Man, which, as Mr. *Pope* says, is the noblest Work of God, and in that respect outshines every Libertine, who shines only like a Glow-worm in the Dark.

But how was it possible, you may say, for *Agur* to know the Way of a Man with a Maid, when every Man has a Way of his own — some better — some worse. — There are a thousand different Ways by which young Women are either married, or undone; — Mankind do not all tread the same Track; — Men and Maids in Courtship are under no Act of Uniformity, and we can hardly suppose that *Agur* was such a Blockhead as to be ignorant of what every Fool knows. — This is a plausible Objection, and might be attended with Difficulty, had I not followed the

88 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

Example of my preaching Predecessors, and consulted the Original for Satisfaction; with this View I went to my Closet, and taking up a Hebrew Bible by Vanderbooght, turned to the Text, and found, as many critical Wiseacres do, that I had been grievously misled by relying upon an *English* Translation; — That the Words *with a Maid*, should be translated *in a Maid*, which is an easy, natural Interpretation, when considered in Connection with what goes before, and a much wiser Man than *Agur* knows no more of this than he does how the Bones grow in the Womb of her that is with Child. It may perhaps be said, *Agur* then talks of nothing but his Ignorance; — True, it is what every wise Man should do; — a Man full of himself always talks like a Fool in my Ears; what.

whatever he may do in his own. — Wisdom, indeed, generally makes People modest, by discovering a Fund of Weakness. — You see I resemble many of my Reverend Brethren, have talked away till involved in a Contradiction, of which two opposite Parts can never be true, for I have, as fairly as ever Parson did, made this same *Agur* both into a wise Man and a Fool.

The Rector of *B* — was told by his Audience, that he raised Devils which He was not able to lay. — I must therefore reconcile the Contradiction as well as I can; — I told you before that *Agur* was an honest Man, and I argue, that Honesty is the best Policy; I told you, likewise, that he was not a first-rate Wit, from which People

90 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

ple of a certain Turn always infer a Fool of the sixth Magnitude.

This *Agur*, it seems, was a Reviewer of Greyhounds, Pilmires, Horse-leeches, &c. his Abilities would not extend to make a Man Fellow of the Royal Society, but they are sufficient and well calculated for a Fellow of the Society of Antiquarians:—He did not review with a Design of rendering his Fellow-creatures contemptible, for he speaks well even of Spiders and Conies, I mean what are vulgarly called Rabbits; and ill of nothing, but Pride, Covetousness, and Debauchery:—He touches upon Oppression, Ingratitude, and Self-conceit, but he leaves whoever chuses it, to infer, and make the Application. — “There is a Generation that curseth their Father, (says he,) “and doth not bless their
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LECTURE V. 91

"Mother — There is a Generation
 "that are pure in their own Eyes,
 "and yet is not washed from their
 "Filthiness — There is a Generation,
 "O how lofty are their Eyes, and
 "their Eye-lids are lifted up —
 "There is a Generation whose Teeth
 "are as Swords, and their Jaw-Teeth
 "as Knives, to devour the Poor from
 "off the Earth, and the Needy from
 "among Men;" — and, I may add,
 there are a Generation of Animals
 and Insects who suck up poisonous
 Matter from the Earth, and are ex-
 ceeding useful, because they leave
 what is wholesome, like Blew-stone,
 Vitriol, which only destroys and
 eats away proud rising Flesh. — There
 are, in like Manner, a Generation who
 dwell upon the Blemishes of an
 Author, and are of use to the Public,
 because what they leave untouched
 may

92 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

may be depended upon for sterling Proof; but we want a Generation who would, like the industrious Bee, carefully collect Honey from every opening Flower, display the Beauties of a Writer, and pass over Imperfections with Candour, considering that Men of Wit may turn any thing into Ridicule; — that it is much easier to censure than plan a Work; — and as one does not foresee the Vicissitude of Human Affairs, it may one time or other come to the Turn of an ill-natured Critic to be himself the Butt of those malévolent Reflexions which he has so long and liberally bestowed upon others. I think a Reviewer should never censure the Abilities of a Writer, or make any Remarks upon his Understanding and Capacity, lest he should censure he knows not who, and the Dishonour rebound upon himself.

self. — It is both his Duty and Interest to make Observations on the Favourable Side, and constantly keep an Eye upon the Work before him. — But not to digress. —

In the fifth Chapter of the *Wisdom of Solomon* we meet with some beautiful Similitudes of this Kind, to shew that a vicious Life is but a transient, and scarce proper to be called even a visionary Scene — That an immoral Character, having nothing to recommend it, naturally sinks into Oblivion, like the Character of a Beast; — Such Men do nothing at best account but eat, drink, sleep, and propagate, and all that Posterity is like to know of them is, the Number of Years they lived, the Names of the Children they begot, the Estates they transmitted to their Descendants,

94 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

ants, or the total Sum of the Wealth they left behind them, after a painful and penurious Life. — Though descended from noble Families, they are recorded as egregious Triflers, have done nothing worthy to be written upon their Monuments but a Number of Actions, which, placed in the most favourable Light, do no Honour to their Memory — Like a Bird in the Air, a Ship in the Sea, or a Serpent upon a Rock, they have fluttered and displayed themselves in wild wandering Mazes and Meanders, but as the Courses they have taken are void of Virtue, the *cui bono* of an antient Philosopher is with them an unanswerable Question, and, like Players, having strutted their Hour or two upon the Stage, pass off in Silence to the Land of Forgetfulness, the Scene closes upon them,
they

they disappear, and are remembered no more.

The Meaning of *Agur*, in this Place, is fully demonstrated by that solemn and animated Complaint which the Wise Man puts in the Mouth of the Wicked at the great and decisive Day of Retribution; than which nothing can be more striking and impressive, as he there describes their Situation in such Language as is impossible for the Powers of Rhetoric or Oratory to exceed; a native Simplicity runs through the Whole, attended by grand majestic Sentiments, which have a Tendency to warm the Heart, improve the Life and Conversation, and awaken those who are not either fast asleep, or quite dead in Trespasses and Sins.

“All

96 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

“All these things (say the Wicked) are passed away like a Shadow, and as a Post that hasteth by, and as a Ship that passes over the Waves of the Water, which, when it is gone by, the Trace thereof cannot be found, neither the Path-way of the Keel in the Waves; — Or, as when a Bird hath flown through the Air, there is no Token of her Way to be found, but the light Air being beaten with the Stroke of her Wings, and parted with the violent Noise and Motion of them is passed through, and therein afterwards no Sign where she went is to be found; — Or like as when an Arrow is shot at a Mark, it parteth the Air, which immediately comes together again, so that a Man cannot know where it went through; — even so we, in like Manner, as soon as we were born began to draw

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LECTURE V. 97

to our End, and had no Sign of Virtue to shew, but were consumed in our own Wickedness." — Thus far consonant to my Text. — But would you see the Elegance of the Passage in its full Force, I must refer you to the Fifth Chapter of the *Wisdom of Solomon*.

The Libertine, as I observed before, shines only like a Glow-worm in the Dark, but there are a Generation of Men, who, like the Sun in his Strength, emit both Light and Heat; who, from the Study of Men and Things, a Knowledge of Human Nature, and a close Observation of Cause and Consequence, can pronounce with as much Certainty as those who live in the Purlieus of the Garden, among the Hundreds of Drury, or the Night-walking Cir-

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cuits

98 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

cuits of *Holbourn, Fleet-street*, and
 the *Strand*, who have as great, and
 a much less guilty Knowledge of
 the World, than those who frequent
Bagnios, Taverns, Play-houses,
V—xh—ll, R—n—lagh, C—rn—lys's,
 or any other public Place of private
 Entertainment, where Recollection is
 lost, and Reflection dissipated. —
 These are Men fit for the public
 Offices and Employments of Life, —
 these are Blessings to a State, and to
 be destitute of such Men is a heavy
 Judgment; — though not experi-
 mentally acquainted with Gallantry
 and Intrigue, they are Men of Re-
 solution and Integrity, whose Ser-
 vices are not gained by Compulsion,
 or purchased by Bribery; — they do
 voluntary Service to their King and
 Country, or, if the Nation be un-
 worthy

LECTURE V. 99

worthy of their Services, pass their Days in Obscurity to the Grave.

Thus have I done with the Character of *Agur*, having shewn, that though he did not attain to *Solomon's* Wisdom, yet he equalled him in the Simplicity, Goodness, and Sincerity of his Heart. — Happy that Man, who, with a competent Degree of Knowledge and Understanding, escapes the Corruptions and Pollutions that are in the World through Lusts, and who keeps himself unspotted by the Vices of the Age.

LECTURE VI.

ECCLES. VII. 28.

— *But a Woman among all those have
I not found.*

INDEED! — Seven Hundred
Wives, Princesses, and Three
Hundred Concubines, but not a
Woman among them! — Bless me,
what a Seraglio! I was just going
to affirm, that no Man, in his sober
Senses, could think *Solomon* a wife
Man, but I recollect that *Lemuel* in-
timates as much, *Prov. xxxi. 10.*
Who can find a virtuous Woman,
(says he,) *for her Price is far above*
Rubies. — A good Woman, it seems,
is a scarce and valuable Commodity,
but if a Man determines to marry,
he

he must e'en take such as the World affords, for if he inspects them too narrowly, he will find, that *in much Wisdom is much Grief, and he that increases Knowledge increases Sorrow.*

Solomon, we may suppose, however, was conversant chiefly among the forward ones, as Kings sometimes are. — Majesty is an enchanting Consideration, and we never read that he was denied by a single Female. — This inspired him with a low Opinion of the Sex, as Mankind generally form Estimates of Human Nature from the Company they keep. — If they associate with Debauchees, it is a true Observation, that there is not a chaste Woman in the World, — and his Majesty seemed tainted with this Infection. But for the Honour of the Ladies I have to say, that

102 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

Tamar denied her Brother *Amnon*, and undoubtedly there were in that Age Women among the *Jews* of greater Chastity, so that he was obliged to ramble in Search of Mistresses among the Sink and Refuse of the neighbouring Nations.

These Heathenish Ladies had Gods and Goddeses of their own; and when the King was old, *i. e.* in his Dotage, when he was become little better than an Old Woman, his Wives turned away his Heart, so that he went after *Ashtoreth*, and *Milcom*, and *Ghemosh*, and *Molech*, and built public Places of Worship in Honour of those fabulous Deities; for some of your sporting Ladies, like Mrs. *Cole* in the *Minor*, do, notwithstanding, keep up a Sort of a Conscience, and venerate the Establishment

blishment of their Country. — The *Scotch* Officer, who ran away with another Man's Wife, was, upon this Principle, constant in his Devotions at the Presbyterian Meeting-house, "Because, gude Mon, (says he,) my awn Kirk prefars extrumpery Prayer, and I ken my awn Kirk does reet."

"Speak well of the Dead," says a grave Divine. — What, replied I, whether they deserve it or not? — Which Way, my good Friend, can I do this, without the Sin of a Lye? Why then be silent, rejoined he. — But the Scripture speaks ill of the Dead where Necessity requires, and if I suppress Truth, I may possibly give a Sanction to bad Example; I shall therefore follow my Bible Rule,

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104 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

and leave you to regulate your Conduct by the Maxims of the World.

Solomon repented in his old Age, — True, says a Respondent, but he was a Buck in his Youth, — i. e. he had a Plurality of Wives; now a Plurality of Wives among the *Jews* was the same with Usury among other Nations. — A *Jew* might lawfully take Wives and Concubines, but he must take no Interest for his Money; — a *Christian* may take Interest for his Money, but is debarred a Variety of Wives, and must have no Concubines at all.

Solomon was no B—st—rd in the Eye of the Law, but he was what would be called, at this Time of Day, the Son of a W—ag-Tail; — that, you know, he could not avoid, and consequently merits no Blame; but

but he was chargeable with several idolatrous Irregularities, which are, no doubt, a Brand upon his Memory; these are what the Scripture lays to his Charge; and that a wise Man should thus be led aside from the Covenant and Statutes of that God who had appeared to him twice, is something very astonishing; but — *Nemo omnibus Floris sapit.*

I have now done with the worst Side of *Solomon's* Character, and shall consider, on the other Hand, what may be said in his Favour. — As to his Youth, I'm afraid the Bucks will copy only the drossy Part of his Example. — *Solomon* was at a great Expence in contributing to the Temple Service, but your modern Bucks spend their Money at the Tavern, and contribute to nothing after Women,

106 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

men, but Cards, Hounds, and Horses. This Passion for Gaming subsists, while the Stipendiary Curates all over the Kingdom are straitened for the comfortable Necessaries of Life. — If *Solomon* was a Buck, he did not throw off all Regard for the Religion of his Country; he was not so abandoned as to starve the Ministers of Righteousness; — this was no Part of his Character. He provided comfortably for the Priests, and the Ecclesiastical Laws, at that Time, allowed a Plurality of Wives, though he took them from the neighbouring Nations, which was an unlawful Act.

And he not only provided for the Ministers of Religion, but made an excellent Prayer at the Dedication of the Temple; whereas your modern

Bucks

Bucks are as great Strangers to the Spirit of Prayer, as Parrots, Jackdaws, or Magpies, and would look upon themselves as affronted, and perhaps demand Satisfaction, if they were supposed capable of it. And lastly, *Solomon* did Justice and Judgment; whereas some, who pretend to follow his Example, run in Debt with honest Tradesmen, and perhaps ruin them in the Upshot, trusting to the Covert of a Protection from the Punishment due to their Crimes, and yet may possibly join in enacting valuable Laws for the Welfare of others; which makes good *Ralpho's* Observation to *Hudibras*—That

No Man does himself convince

By his own Doctrine of his Sins.

And

108 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

And though all cry down Self, none means

His own Self in a literal Sense.

No Man includes himself, nor turns

The Point upon his own Concerns.

But not to digress. — An amiable Woman, my Friends, is the most excellent Character in the Circle of our Acquaintance; Softness and Delicacy, joined to Prudence and Discretion, is highly commendable; Religion and Virtue are the Cements of Society; and if to these we add Good-sense, Good-nature, and Good-breeding, they furnish out a comfortable Companion and Partner for Life. — While your mere dressy Ladies, like the fluttering Peacock, display only the Beauties of the Tail; — or like an ordinary House, with a genteel Front, invite Passengers to —

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no Entertainment; the best Apartments are unfurnished, or to be lett, and the outside Rooms ornamented with Tinsel.

This wise King of *Israel*, who was likewise a Most Reverend Father in God, notwithstanding the Frailties of his Life, had counted a Thousand, one by one, to find a worthy valuable Woman, which he was very desirous to do, and yet his Expectations were disappointed. He sought for such a one with all his Soul, and yet could not find her, which made him, I fancy, to say in his Book of Proverbs, Chap. xviii. ver. 22. *Whoso findeth a Wife findeth a good Thing, and obtaineth Favour of the Lord.* Now when a married Man makes great Encomiums upon the Excellence of a good

110 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

good Wife in general; I always take it for granted, that he is not thoroughly satisfied with his own.— It has been objected, that *Solomon*, in his *Song*, gives an amiable Character of *Pharoah's* Daughter; now, for Argument's Sake, supposing this to be the true Sense of that Book, it is not properly a *Character* that he gives, but rather, as the *Irish* Joy observed, a *Description* of her outward Man,—a Delineation of her Form, Person, Features, and Complexion; or supposing it extended further, an *Epithalamium* is no proper Proof of a Woman's Virtue; a young Gentleman may think his Mistress angelic when he has just married her, but he sometimes finds, in a little while, that the Name of Woman would do her Honour, as a closer and more experimental Acquaintance

LECTURE VI. III

quaintance gives him to understand, that she is a-kin to those Animals which have no Understanding.

If a prudent Wife comes from the Lord, an imprudent one certainly comes from a different Quarter.—

And what can be more imprudent in a Woman than to deck a Body, possessed by an uncultivated Mind, like whited Sepulchres, which Men walk over without being aware of them, and are trapped before they can properly examine.— It is the Part or Duty of a Wife to study her Husband's Humour, to comply with his Orders in every Thing lawful and honest, to consult his Taste, to deny her own, and make it her Business to please him, by soothing the Cares and Anxieties of Mind to which the other Sex are more immediately

112 LEAP-YEAR LECTURES.

mediately exposed, to improve herself for his Advantage, and cultivate Good-nature, which is one of the sweetest Ingredients in the Character of a compleat Woman. — But when a Wife, on the contrary, makes a Point of pleasing herself, insisting upon the Gratification of her own Will, whether reasonable or the reverse, making her own Taste the Standard of Family Affairs, and her Husband's Inclination a Thing of no Significance; when Clamour, Fretfulness, and Discontent are the Entertainment of his vacant Hours, and the constant Employment of his Fire-side, and she becomes so ill-natured as even to repine at and envy his Felicity, or aim at Things which his Circumstances will not extend to provide; in short, when Dress and Management are either

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neglected on one hand, or carried to an Extreme on the other, she then forfeits the Character of a Woman; and acquires Titles which one would not chuse to repeat. — I would, therefore, advise my fair Countrywomen to act in such a manner as may secure the Esteem of all around them; let Religion, vital Religion and Virtue, be the prime Ingredients in your Characters: — Study to be supremely good, and to act a rational and worthy Part in every Scene and Circumstance of Life; endeavour to inform every one her own Judgment, and live up to the Conviction of your own Minds. — The Time and Expence wasted in the unnecessary Parts of Dress, serve only to recommend you to those who may be of great Disservice in the Course of Life, and render you

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contemptible to those whose Approbation would be your greatest Honour, and who are capable of promoting your true Interests. — The chief Ornaments of a Woman are those of the Mind, which may be procured at a much less Expence than those of the Body, and are in the Power of Ladies with narrow and scanty, as well as more affluent and extensive Fortunes; — these render you brilliant and amiable; they not only attract, but preserve the Observation and Esteem of others; and while your shewy Ladies, with fluttering and empty Heads, or fickle and inconstant Hearts, are setting off themselves to Persons of no Importance, you will have the Satisfaction to find, that you have administered Pleasure to Men of Sense and Honour, and that you have secured

LECTURE VI. 115

secured that Happiness in this World,
to say nothing of another and better,
of which you will see, by Experience,
that those superficial and un-
thinking Ladies shall never partake.

F I N I S

LECTURE VI. 115

secured the Happiness in this World,
to say nothing of another and better,
of which you will see, by Expe-
rience, that those superficial and un-
thinking Men never partake.



FINIS

